



Trencher's rounded steel bucket is welded onto a quick-tach mounting plate. A pair of carbide steel teeth spaced 6 in. apart weld to front edge.



“Made It Myself” Trencher

A home-built trencher mounted on a skid loader makes it easy for Mark Majerus to dig narrow trenches to lay cable or pipe.

The trencher consists of a 6-in. wide rounded bucket made from 1/4-in. thick carbide steel, which is welded onto a quick-tach mounting plate. The bottom part of the trencher is open and has a pair of carbide steel teeth spaced 6 in. apart welded onto it.

To dig a trench, Majerus tilts the skid loader's bucket cylinders down and backs up at the same time. Once the trencher is partially full, he tilts the cylinders again while raising the trencher to scoop up the soil.

“It does the job of a state-of-the-art trencher at a fraction of the cost,” says Majerus. “It can

dig down 26 in. deep, although I generally bury electrical wire about 18 to 19 in. deep. The only problem is that if the dirt gets too wet and sticky it's hard to dump out of the bucket.”

Majerus bought the teeth and quick-tach mounting plate at St. Joseph Equipment (Titan Machinery) in Shakopee, Minn. (www.stjosephequipment.com; ph 952 445-5400). The teeth came with an insert which he welded into place. Then he slipped the teeth over the insert and welded them on.

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Billy Gilbert made his wheelbarrow more stable and increased its hauling capacity by adding 2 matching wheels on front.

“Tip-Proof” 3-Wheeled Wheelbarrow

You can make a wheelbarrow much more stable and increase its hauling capacity by converting it from one wheel to three, says Billy Gilbert, Apex, N.C.

He added 2 matching wheels to the front of his wheelbarrow. He replaced the wheelbarrow's original axle with a longer length of steel rod. He also cut up some hard electrical conduit as spacers over the rod to separate the wheels.

“It lets me move heavy loads around my farm or yard with less effort than handling a one-wheeled load,” says Gilbert. “By leveraging the load onto 3 wheels there's less chance of tipping.”

“I'm amazed at how well it handles. If one of the wheels rolls over a hole, the wheelbarrow will just keep on going without tipping.”

Gilbert says he originally intended to add just one wheel to make a 2-wheeled wheelbarrow, but then found another wheel about the same size. “I figured that if two



Wheelbarrow's original axle was replaced with a long steel rod. Electrical conduit spacers separate the wheels.

wheels is good, then three has to be better. The three wheels all have heavy-duty wheel bearings and grease fittings.”

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He Made Wild Hogs His Business

With an estimated 1 1/2 million wild hogs in Texas, R.A. “Bubba” Ortiz has plenty to do. His Ortiz Game Management catches and removes wild hogs from clients' properties. His contract client list includes municipalities, universities, companies and private landowners.

“We've helped out national parks, golf courses and even an international airport,” says Ortiz. “We have worked up to 200 to 300 miles from our offices.” Services include a population survey, monitoring, development of strategy, and trap design. He does minor brush clearing if needed, sets up the trap and begins baiting, monitoring and relocation of the trap if needed.

“I may need to try several baiting methods to assess and interpret hog behavior,” he says. “Monitoring may also suggest needed changes in the trap or site.”

Once he has them trapped, Ortiz transports them to his certified, state approved holding facility, Bubba's Bacon Station. Hogs are held until he can get the best price. That may be from a certified game ranch, a meat processor or an individual wanting to butcher out a wild hog for its lean meat.

While he also buys hogs from other trappers, he says his operation is fairly unique. “Most trappers don't do it full-time,” he says. “This is all we do. It's how we pay the mortgage.”

Most years, Ortiz traps between 300 and 400 animals, although he hit a record 750 a few years ago.

“It is easy to be a hero when you chase hogs in a target-rich environment,” he says. “In Texas, there are 2 kinds of landowners - those with wild hogs and those who will

eventually get them.”

To do his job, Ortiz maintains around 35 trapping systems with electronic as well as traditional mechanical sets. He alters them as needed, explaining that the feral hogs are very intelligent. They quickly learn to avoid a particular type of trap, door or tripping mechanism.

“Some traps work better than others, but success depends on the education of the hog,” says Ortiz. “If pushed hard with a particular kind of trap, they will learn to consider it dangerous and avoid it.”

When that happens, he will redesign a trap, switching out the door, feeding mechanism, or other components.

Technology is making a difference as Ortiz has added remote wireless cameras and other equipment to his tools. Now he can set up a trap and check the area visually from a smartphone or other device. If hogs are in the area, he can trigger a bait release, and when the hogs enter, trigger a door.

“The remote equipment allows me to cover a bigger area more effectively,” he says. “It also lets me insure that the bait attracts hogs, not deer and raccoon as prebaiting a trap can do.”

“You can't beat boots on the ground,” he says. “Even with remotes, you need time and the knowledge to scout, track and redesign as needed. I try not to let the hogs outsmart me.”

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Trough Built Tough For Wild Hogs

R.A. “Bubba” Ortiz builds watering troughs that are wild hog tough. He had to. Ortiz Game Management handles 300 to 400 feral hogs in an average year, but can catch, buy and sell as many as 700. He needed a low-cost watering system that would stand up to the beating a wild boar can deliver.

“In the past, the hogs would turn waterers over or climb inside them and leave excrement in them,” says Ortiz. “We had to constantly check on them and clean them so the hogs didn't get sick.”

Ortiz wanted healthy hogs for the multiple markets he sells to. That means having plenty of clean water available. His pvc waterers solved the problem.

“I use the heavy-duty pvc pipe with screw-on caps on the ends,” says Ortiz. “I have 2 sizes - a 6-in. for smaller groups and a 10-in. for larger groups.”

The 6-in. pipe has 5-in. dia. cutouts for the pigs to access the water. The 10-in. pipes have 6-in. cutouts.

The screw-on caps make the waterers easy to clean out, but it is the chains attached to the pen's concrete borders that really make the difference.

The chains go around the pipes and through holes in the concrete. Turnbuckles connecting the ends clamp the chains down tight on the waterers.

“They put their noses in and try to lift up the pipes, but they can't pull it off the concrete or break the chain,” says Ortiz. “When it's time to clean, I just unscrew the cap and wash the pipe out.”

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Trough is made from a heavy-duty pvc pipe with screw-on caps on the ends. Cut-outs allow pigs to access the water.

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